

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership

Deadline for Proposal Submission: September 15, 2015

Introduction: The Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership (RFHP) is pleased to request proposals for partial funding of reservoir fisheries habitat enhancement projects. The RFHP is a national partnership established to promote and facilitate the conservation of habitat for fish and other aquatic species in reservoir systems through collaborative actions that contribute to:

- *The ecological health and function of reservoirs and their associated waters and watersheds*
- *The restoration, protection and enhancement of fish and other aquatic species and communities, therein*
- *The sustainability and enhancement of reservoir fisheries*
- *Public awareness of the conservation issues and challenges facing reservoir and associated waters and watershed management in the 21st Century*
- *The quality of life of the American people*

Proposed projects can be focused on habitat issues in the reservoir proper and/or in watersheds above the reservoir and/or tailwaters below.

Eligible applicants include: state and federal governmental agencies; non-governmental organizations (e.g., sportsman's groups, community associations, watershed user groups, cooperatives, civic groups), municipalities, universities, schools, state and tribal governments. Projects must be on public reservoirs. Projects on reservoirs with no or limited public access are not eligible. **Proposals must include "on-the-ground" habitat restoration objectives. Research proposals are not acceptable.**

Project Duration: Work conducted for the project is to be completed within 12-18 months of contract approval. Projects should be designed to begin in June 2016; however funding from RFHP is likely not going to be available until summer to early fall 2016. Actual project start date will be the date funding documents are signed.

Funding: Approximately **\$90,000** is available for projects. RFHP anticipates funding 5-6 projects @ \$10,000-\$20,000 each. Given the limited amount of funding available at this time, RFHP grants should be considered as a partial funding source for projects with multiple funding sources and partners. Grants must have a minimum of **1:1 non-federal contributions**, which may be in cash, time, goods, or other services. All contributions (cash and/or in-kind) must be acquired during the project period. Special consideration will be given to projects with more than the minimum match. Eligible costs will be paid for work done no earlier than contract approval. Grant funds may **NOT** be used to support overhead, political advocacy, deficit reduction activities, projects that have already been completed, or for activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by state or Federal law. Salaries of full-time employees may be part of the grant request as long as they are for only time spent directly on planning, administration and/or "on the ground" work on the project. Applicants are urged to not make "salaries" a major part of the funding request.

Applicants are strongly urged to discuss project ideas with the Coordinator prior to submitting proposals if questions about eligibility exist.

For questions relative to project development and submission contact: Jeff Boxrucker, Coordinator, Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership; 405-659-1797; jboxrucker@sbcglobal.net or visit the www.reservoirpartnership.org website.

Proposal Requirements: Proposals should be no more than 10 pages in length, formatted as described in Appendix A. This page limitation does not include attachments and support materials. Timelines may use a June 1, 2016 starting date, but the actual start date will be determined by completion of the contract document (funding is not likely to be available prior to June 2016).

Proposal Selection Process: Final projects will be selected for funding following review by the Regional Working Groups. Members of each Regional Working Group (geographically aligned with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Association regions) will review and score each project proposal based on the criteria listed below. Each of the Regional Working Groups will submit their prioritized list of projects to the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership Executive Committee which will select projects for funding at their fall meeting (November 2015). Projects selected will then be submitted to the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) Board and to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for final approval (early 2016). Applicants will be notified of final proposal status upon review by NFHP and FWS (early 2016). Given that funding is from federal sources, environmental compliance documents are required. Successful applicants will be advised on how to fill out these documents. The RFHP Coordinator is available to assist in this process.

Evaluation criteria: Projects will be scored according to criteria in three categories:

- **Category I: Aquatic Habitat Restoration/Protection (130 possible points)**
 - Priority Regional Reservoir Habitat Impairments
 - RFHP completed a nationwide reservoir habitat impairment assessment in 2013
 - Impairments were prioritized by region of the country (see map and table in Appendix B)
 - Proposals will score more points if addressing the higher regional habitat impairments (table in Appendix B);
 - Clearly state the impairment(s) that the project is focusing on and state how project will address the impairment(s);
 - Cite a management plan that identifies the impairment (if available and include a link if published on the web) Note: contact the management agency to see if a written plan addressing habitat impairments exists.
 - Clearly state the objective(s) of the project. Objectives should include how the project will address the impairment and what performance measures will be used to determine success.
 - Examples of performance measures include:
 - Siltation/turbidity and excessive nutrients
 - Amount (area or length) of riparian area stabilized;

- Amount of sedimentation reduced (rate, tons/ac etc.);
- Number of sediment retention structures installed or % base load treated;
- Number of watershed BMP's implemented (sewer pump-outs, farming practice improvements, pet waste policies, removal of impervious surfaces etc.);
- Amount (area) of wetlands created, protected or restored for nutrient removal;
- Amount of nutrients removed (could include deactivation with alum or physical removal by excavation).
- Degraded shorelines and/or loss of sensitive habitats
 - Amount (length or linear ft²) of shoreline wetlands or submergent/emergent vegetation protected, created or restored;
 - Amount (length or linear ft²) of shoreline habitat protected, created or restored;
 - Amount (area) of cove habitat protected, created or restored.
- Structural habitat
 - Amount of structure added;
 - Number and size of brush piles, rock piles, etc.
 - Number of native plants planted along with number and size of structures built to protect plants from herbivory;
 - Acres of nuisance/invasive plants treated/removed
 - Changes in water quality parameters;
 - Changes in fish sampling catch rates in affected area,
 - Changes in rates of recruitment, or population size structure;
 - Changes in angler catch rates, harvest rates, and measures of directed fishing effort;
 - Measures of recreational use or economic benefit.
- Water Regime
 - Negotiations held with water management agencies;
 - Fisheries-favorable water level management plan/water release schedule secured;
 - Water rights secured;
 - Fish loss barriers installed.
- Connectivity
 - Acres of cove/backwater habitat reconnected to main body of reservoir;
 - Miles of stream/river reconnected to body of reservoir;
 - Barriers to upstream migration removed.

- Describe the type and duration of monitoring following completion of the restoration efforts. (**Project monitoring and evaluation is a major component of the proposal scoring process and should be an integral part of proposal development.**)
 - Include duration of monitoring program;
 - Include a brief description of what, if any, baseline information is available.
- **Category II: Quality of Life (50 pts)**
 - Would the habitat project in question help the RFHP achieve its objectives to provide, protect and enrich quality of life for all Americans?
 - Develop environmental amenities, nature experiences, and wildlife-based activities and opportunities on lands adjacent to reservoir systems to engage and inform local communities and visiting public on the values and benefits of healthy reservoir systems;
 - Promote conservation of fish and aquatic resources to boaters and other water-based recreationists;
 - Maintain and enhance public access;
 - Support recreational industries and related economic activities that advance watershed health and contribute to conservation of fisheries and aquatic habitats in reservoir systems.
 - Would the project restore/enhance habitat that would directly support an economically important or high-use fishery (as documented in past studies or the published literature) or other types of fisheries within the project area? List the targeted sport fishes that the project is intended to affect in order of priority.
 - Would project outcomes lead to improvements in water quality for human health, recreational use, or ecological health of the reservoir system? Be specific in how this project directly or indirectly will positively affect water quality.

Category III: Partnerships, Fund Leveraging, and Promotion (80 pts)

- Would the habitat project in question help the RFHP achieve its objectives to establish partnerships between management agencies and reservoir stakeholders; leverage outside sources of funding; and advance public awareness and understanding of the value of healthy reservoir systems?
 - Establish national and regional technological assistance, data sharing and information network capacities to support development and adoption of best management practices among managers and among individuals and organizations engaged in the conservation of fish habitat in reservoir systems;
 - Support and participate in watershed planning initiatives to promote implementation of best management practices for conservation of fisheries and fish habitat in reservoir systems;
 - To ensure practitioner awareness of and access to RFHP and its support capacities, establish outreach to reservoir managers, relevant authorities and communities within reservoir systems, and other private and public stakeholders engaged in conservation of those systems and their fisheries;

- Develop and formalize institutional relationships between RFHP and principle partners to establish landscape-level networks of communication and governance that will facilitate effective, efficient, and sustaining conservation of aquatic habitat in reservoir systems;
 - Identify and develop long-term funding opportunities for RFHP projects and operations;
 - Advance public awareness of the economic, societal and ecological value and benefits of healthy reservoir systems;
 - Advance public understanding of the connections between habitat quality in reservoir systems and land-use practices within their associated watersheds;
 - Nurture a public that is well-informed and involved in current and emerging resource issues in reservoir systems.
- List all partners involved in the project
 - Include type of partner, i.e., state, federal, ngo, municipality, user-groups;
 - To be considered a partner they must appear in the budget table and provide either cash or in-kind contributions to the project;
 - Identify the degree of involvement that the state fish and wildlife management agency has with the project (**letter of support from state fish and wildlife agency must accompany the proposal**).
 - Develop a budget and include funds leveraged from all partners (list all partners and the amount of cash and/or in-kind contribution from each partner separately in the budget table included in Appendix A).

Appendix A

Proposal Format

Please use the format below to ensure a complete application: No proposal should exceed 10 pages (items such as maps, photos or letters of support do not count toward the page limit).

A. Applicant Information:

Name and address of applicant organization

Name, title, and contact information (address, phone number and e-mail) of principal investigator or project leader

Name of Friends of Reservoirs member organization involved in the project (if applicable)

B. Project Information:

Title

Location – Reservoir name; Region reservoir is located in (see map in Appendix B);

GPS coordinates if possible; map of project location is helpful

U.S. Congressional District (available on the web)

Project objective(s)

Estimated on-the-ground start and end dates (not award date)

Amount of grant and estimated total cost of project - Add details under section D. below

List of partners **(to be considered a partner they must appear in the budget table and provide either cash or in-kind contributions to the project)**

C. Project Description (largest portion of proposal):

1. **Project overview** to include the existing relevant habitat conditions and the desired or targeted conditions (project outcomes expected i.e., size of area to be restored, number of habitat structures to be installed, species that will benefit from the restoration activity and the specific restoration methods and techniques that will be used). **The project overview is a critical part of the application** that should provide reviewers with sufficient detail to fully understand the proposed project. Please review the Evaluation Criteria above to ensure that all relevant information has been included.
2. **Monitoring plan overview**, including project goals, monitoring parameters, monitoring methods and schedule, and target and reference values.
3. **Outreach plan overview** summarizing critical activities for stakeholder/ community involvement.
4. **Provisions to protect the restoration project site after project completion**, including provisions for long-term maintenance, if needed.
5. **List of required permits** and any other environmental compliance issues to be considered (Federal, state, local), indicating any that have already been secured or addressed.
6. **Project timeline.** Projects should be designed to begin in June 2016 and have a 12-18 month duration (extensions are available due to extenuating circumstances such as weather delays or unusual water levels).

D. Budget:

1. **Amount requested** through Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership.

2. **Amount of in-kind** contributions (specify amounts and sources, both in kind and cash for each partner). Federal funds cannot be used as in-kind contributions. Use the table below.

Partner Contributions must be listed separately in table. Add more lines to table if needed.

3. The timeline should be an approximation of when the funds under each funding category will be spent, i.e., June through August, 2016.

Categories	Partner Contribution Amount	Cash or In-Kind	Timeline (anticipated date of expenditures)
Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership			
Administrative/Technical Services			
Construction Costs/Materials			
Labor (paid)			
Labor (volunteer)			
Miscellaneous (outreach materials)			
Partner B (name)			
Administrative/Technical Services			
Construction Costs/Materials			
Labor (paid)			
Labor (volunteer)			
Miscellaneous (outreach materials)			
Partner C (name)			
Administrative/Technical Services			
Construction Costs/Materials			
Labor (paid)			
Labor (volunteer)			
Miscellaneous (outreach materials)			
Total Direct Costs			

* Volunteer labor should be calculated at \$10/hr for age 16 and under; 18/hr other volunteers; agency staff labor rates @ \$24/hr

3. **Budget narrative:** A budget justification should be included to further explain how the funds will be used. Please explain expenditures in detail. Major equipment purchases, types of supplies, and specific contracts should be identified. An explanation of each line item in the Reservoir Partnership portion of the project must be included.

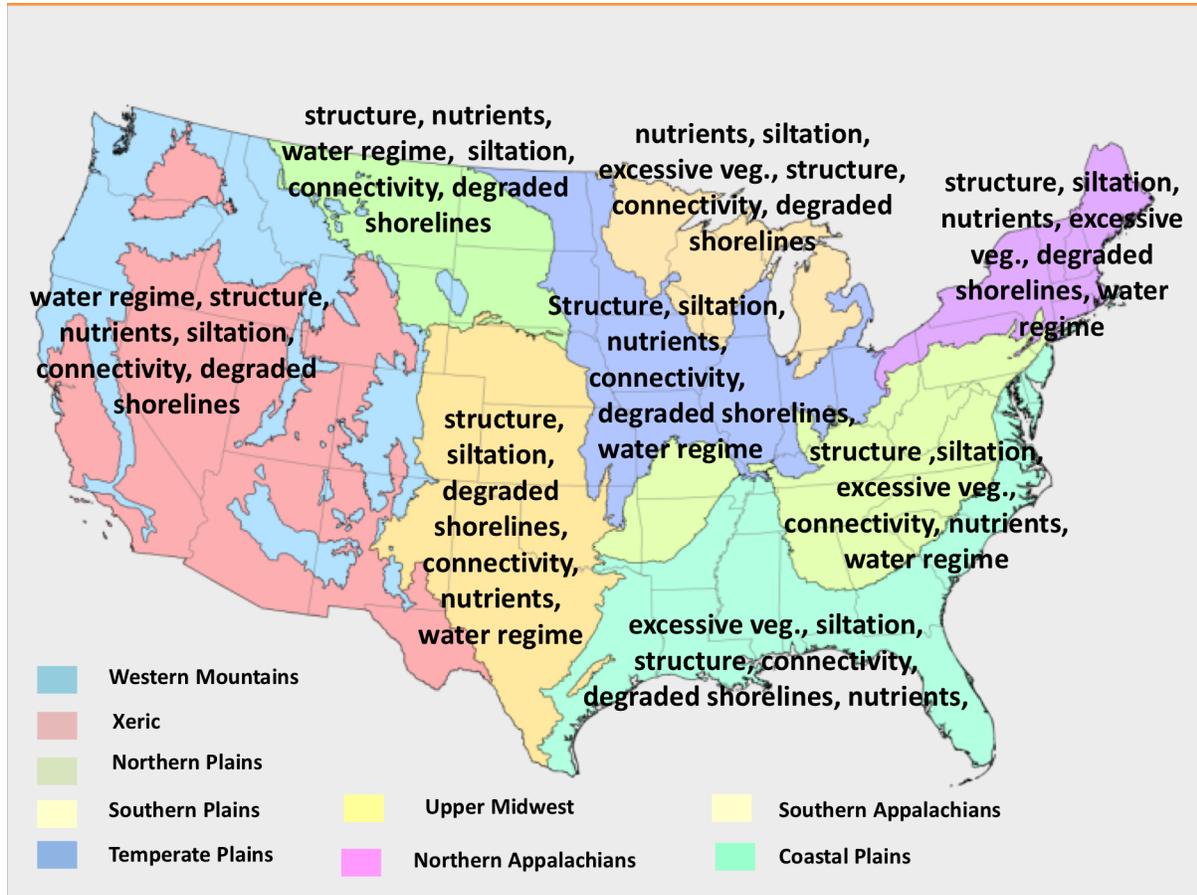
Optional supporting materials (do not count toward page limits):

1. Map(s) of the proposed project location and site in addition to the described location under B above.
2. Aerial or on-the-ground photos of the proposed project site. Though not required, these visual aids will help to support the proposal. Photos taken from the ground should show the current condition of the site. All photos should be identified with date of photo and location.
3. Letters of Support-Besides letters in support of the project from community leaders, stakeholders, or others, documentation may include support letter(s) from those owning land upon which project will be undertaken, such as private landowners or appropriate public land owners agency resource personnel. **Letter of support from state fisheries management agency staff member is required.**

Submit proposals electronically (Word; .pdf) to:
jboxrucker@sbcglobal.net by 15 September 2014.

APPENDIX B

Priority Impairments by Region



- Regions above were used to differentiate priority impairments in the assessment.
- Lists of impairments are based on the percent of reservoirs in each region that were moderately to high or highly impaired for individual impairments.
- The Western Mountains and Xeric were combined into two regions for purposes of the RFP because impairments were similar and to make it easier for applicants to discern which region the target reservoir is in.
- Lists of impairments for each region are in priority order (see table on next page).

(Top 2 Impairments in each Region-50 pts; 3rd and 4th-25 pts; 5th and 6th-10 pts)

REGION	IMPAIRMENT	POINTS
Western Mountain/Xeric	Water Regime (low retention, mistimed fluctuations, extreme drawdowns)	50
	Lack of Structural Habitat (woody and vegetation)	
	Excessive Nutrients (algae blooms)	25
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Connectivity (lack of connection with embayments/backwaters, tributaries)	10
	Degraded Shoreline Areas (excessive shallows, mudflats, disturbed riparian)	
Northern Plains	Lack of Structural Habitat	50
	Excessive Nutrients	
	Water Regime	25
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Connectivity	10
	Degraded Shoreline Areas	
Upper Midwest	Excessive Nutrients	50
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Excessive Vegetation (typically invasive/non-native plants)	25
	Lack of Structural Habitat	
	Connectivity	10
	Degraded Shoreline Areas	
Southern Plains	Lack of Structural Habitat	50
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Degraded Shoreline Areas	25
	Connectivity	
	Excessive Nutrients	10
	Water Regime	
Temperate Plains	Lack of Structural Habitat	50
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Excessive Nutrients	25
	Connectivity	
	Degraded Shoreline Areas	10
	Water Regime	
Coastal Plains	Excessive Vegetation	50
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Lack of Structural Habitat	25
	Connectivity	
	Degraded Shoreline Areas	10
	Excessive Nutrients	
Northern Appalachians	Lack of Structural Habitat	50
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Excessive Nutrients	25
	Excessive Vegetation	
	Degraded Shoreline Areas	10
	Water Regime	
Southern Appalachians	Lack of Structural Habitat	50
	Siltation/Turbidity	
	Excessive Vegetation	25
	Connectivity	
	Excessive Nutrients	10
	Water Regime	